

## What is LEED?

**LEED** stands for the **Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design** certification process. It is a project of the U. S. Green Building Council which has formulated standards for measuring building construction or remodeling on 'green' or earth-friendly criteria. There are four levels of LEED certification - Certified, Silver, Gold and Platinum. A building project may be awarded LEEDs certification by submitting information on the construction and design of the building in many categories. Points are assigned to each effort. The total number of points given determines which level of LEEDs the building will be awarded.

## What are the criteria?

There are six general categories of LEEDs measures:

### **1. Sustainable sites: Was the site chosen and the building constructed in a way that minimizes the impact on the environment?**

Was a site chosen that is NOT farmland, wetlands, park land, sensitive wildlife habitat, in a floodplain, or in opposition to the Clean Water Act?

Was a site chosen that can make a positive impact by reclaiming a former brownfield or otherwise reducing pollution or reducing pressure on undeveloped land?

Was the site chosen to enable users to be close to facilities and public transportation?

Will storm water run-off and erosion be controlled both during construction and after?

Does the building have a small footprint (pave over as little land as possible relative to its intended use)?

Does the building minimize the heat-island effect (minimizing heat from the sun being absorbed and radiated back into the area)?

Is lighting designed to reduce light pollution at night?

### **2. Water efficiency: Is the building and its landscaping designed to minimize water use?**

Are plantings chosen that need little or no irrigation?

Will the building use less water than used in similar-sized buildings?

Can gray waste water be recycled or reused on site?

### **3. Energy and Atmosphere: Will the building reduce the energy required for use and will it use less polluting forms of energy?**

Will the building use 'green' power - from solar or wind or other replaceable resources rather than coal, oil or gas?

Is the building designed to be weather tight?

Are the mechanicals and appliances energy-efficient?

Do the energy-related systems (heating, cooling, ventilation, power, lighting, refrigerants, etc.) perform as projected and were they designed to minimize use of resources?

**4. Materials and Resources: Were building materials chosen that minimize the energy used to manufacture or mine them and transport them to the site?**

Were reused, repurposed and/or recycled materials incorporated into the building?

Were new materials made of rapidly renewable resources?

Were local materials used to reduce the need to transport heavy materials over long distances?

Was construction waste recycled or reused or otherwise diverted from the waste stream?

Is there a recycling center in the building? Are inhabitants encouraged to throw less away?

Were wood products certified as harvested in a sustainable way?

**5. Indoor Environmental Quality: Does the building provide clean air and a comfortable, safe environment for inhabitants?**

Is there a system to provide adequate ventilation and filtering of air?

Were wood products, paints, finishes, sealants, adhesives, carpets and other materials chosen that do not off-gas or otherwise add to indoor air pollution?

Is the indoor temperature, lighting and humidity controllable and comfortable for the buildings users?

**6. Innovation and Design: Are there other factors in the construction or use of this building that should be recognized?**

Have the designers or users of the building made an effort to educate the public about LEEDs or the benefits of 'green' building?

Has there been an attempt to educate about less-energy intensive landscaping alternatives?

Do the users of the building plan to use eco-friendly cleaning products?

Are there other ways this building can be used to lower the global footprint of its users?

